



APPROPRIATIONS & CROSSCUTTING WEEKLY REPORT

Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations

Week Ending April 27, 2018

FY 2019 BUDGET HEARINGS

April 26, 2018

House Energy and Commerce and House Appropriations

WASHINGTON DC—Administrator Pruitt appeared at back-to-back hearings by the House Energy and Commerce Committee's Energy Subcommittee and the House Appropriations Interior-Environment Subcommittee Thursday. He rejected a litany of ethics complaints against him as lies intended to derail President Donald Trump's agenda, and put much of the blame for any agency missteps on his staff.

During the two tense congressional hearings, the Administrator faced tough questions from Democrats and even some fellow Republicans in marathon high-stakes testimony. "Facts are facts and fiction is fiction," he told a House of Representatives panel. "And a lie doesn't become true just because it appears in the front page of the newspaper." "Those who attack the EPA and attack me are doing so because they want to attack and derail the president's agenda and undermine this administration's priorities," the Administrator testified.

Although the hearings were scheduled to discuss the EPA budget, they focused mainly on the Administrator's performance. Nonetheless, he was able to tout his accomplishments, highlighting "measurable achievements" that have thus far occurred since he has taken office, in addition to new regulatory reforms. "There is consequential and important work being done at the EPA since the beginning of the administration, both in terms of improved environmental outcomes as well as substantial regulatory reforms," Administrator Pruitt said. Topics raised in both hearings related to WIFIA, Hurricane Recovery, GHG & Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards, cooperative federalism with States, and Brownfields.

Hearing Transcripts are expected to be released next week. Questions for the Record are expected to be received from both committees within the next two weeks.



BUDGET HEARINGS:

Senate Appropriations Committee: May 15– Tentative

Senate Environment and Public Works: TBD

CONFIRMATION HEARING:

Assistant Administrator Charles McIntosh– Office of International and Tribal Affairs (OITA)- May 9

UPCOMING EVENTS:

PADs/Comms Directors Meeting - May 2-3, 2018

PUBLIC HAPPENINGS : Science Advisory Board Staff Office

Public Meeting: SAB CAAC-ETBE/tBA Panel Teleconference: Chartered Science Advisory Board (SAB) Meeting May 31-June 1, 2018: A Federal Register Notice was published on April 18th, 2018, announcing a public face to face meeting for the Chartered SAB on May 31-June 1, 2018. This will be the first face to face for the newly appointed board. The draft agenda proposes review of the finalized report on the risk and technology review for NESHAPs (National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants), discussion on the planned actions on the regulatory agenda, and briefings on the agency's efforts on the Lead Task Force and PFAS (perfluoroalkyl substances). A request for the Administrator to welcome the new Chartered Board was submitted.

Public Meeting: SAB CAAC-ETBE/tBA Panel Teleconference June 6, 2018: A follow up public teleconference of the SAB Chemical Assessment Advisory Committee (CAAC) augmented for ETBE and TBA Panel is in the planning stages. . A Federal Register Notice (FRN) package to announce the public teleconference is currently being prepared and will be submitted to the Office of Policy the week of April 30th. The purpose of the teleconference (to be held June 6, 2018) is to continue deliberation on the panel's draft report responding to the Agency's request for SAB Peer Review of the documents: *Toxicological Review for Ethyl Tertiary Butyl Ether (ETBE) (External Review Draft, dated June 2017)* and *Toxicological Review of tert-Butyl Alcohol (tert-butanol or tBA) (External Review Draft, dated June 2017)*.

SCIENCE HAPPENINGS: Office of Research and Development

Field Studies at Reynolds Metals Company Superfund Site, Troutdale, OR

This week, at the request of Region 10, NRMRL's Robert Ford, Steve Acree, and Randall Ross will travel to the Reynolds Metals Company Superfund Site to demonstrate tools for mapping groundwater and surface water interactions with lakes and rivers that border the site. The planned work will provide Region 10 and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality with tools to evaluate where groundwater may be reaching above-ground levels and entering surface waters near the site. The Reynolds Metals Company site is the former location of the Reynolds/Alcoa aluminum smelter. Activities at the site generated metals-bearing wastes that contaminated soil, groundwater, surface water and sediment.

Interagency Collaborative for Environmental Modeling and Monitoring (ICEMM) Meeting

This week, in Rockville, Maryland, ICEMM will hold a meeting with the six federal agencies, including ORD, cooperating in the research and development of multimedia environmental models, software, and related databases. The public meeting will include information on developments in environmental modeling applications, tools and frameworks, and new operational initiatives among the participating agencies. Brenda Rashleigh, NHEERL's MI to the SSWR research program, will present on the history and priorities of the ICEMM. More information

Sharing Expertise in China

This week, NHEERL's Christopher Lau will present on "PFAS Toxicology and Recent Risk Assessment Activities," at the 2018 International Symposium on Chemical Risk Prediction and Management in Dalian, China. After the symposium, Dr. Lau will visit the School of Environmental Science and Technology at Dalian University of Technology and present a seminar on the same topic. NCCT scientist Maureen Gwinn was also invited to present at Dalian University of Technology on the use of new approach methodologies in chemical risk assessment in the US, specifically related to her work with other international collaborators through the Accelerating the Pace of Chemical Risk Assessment (APCRA) workshops. This effort is an important initiative to increase US and international interaction and engagement related to the safety of chemicals.

ASTM Waste Management Meeting to Develop Consensus Standards

Last week, NERL's Brian Schumacher and John Zimmerman hosted the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Waste Management Committee Meeting (i.e., ASTM Committee D34) at the NERL-Las Vegas facility. The meeting was attended by members representing EPA, states, and industry. Participants discussed and edited multiple consensus standards over the course of the two-day meeting. An ASTM consensus standard is developed by seeking the input of a cross-section of stakeholders with an interest in its use. ASTM technical committees, like ASTM Committee D34, meet as part of the process of standards development.

ECOS Air and Water Calls on Research Planning

In an effort to prioritize states' needs, ORD is coordinating media-specific calls with ECOS and its research arm – the Environmental Research Institute of the States (ERIS) – to gather information that will inform future planning and contribute to the development of ORD's Strategic Research Action Plans refresh. This week, two calls will be held focused on Air and Water research planning. For these initial project formulation calls, ORD will discuss proposed high level changes/priorities, and how the 2016 ERIS states' research priorities have informed ORD's research planning to date. State media associations have also been invited to participate, as well as EPA program and regional office representatives. The goal is to better connect state research needs with Agency priorities to ensure that ORD's research and development is useful and practical to help states address their on-the-ground problems.

Superfund Support

Last week, Jonathan Essoka, Felicia Barnett, Jan Szaro (OSP) and Dave Burden (NRMRL) discussed potential technical support needs related to passive groundwater and surface water sampling methods at the Central Chemical Superfund Site in Hagerstown, MD. The site is a former pesticide/fertilizer blending and packaging facility where plumes of agricultural pesticides have contaminated the surface and groundwater.



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

NEWS RELEASE

WWW.EPA.GOV/NEWSROOM

EPA Administrator Pruitt Proposes Rule To Strengthen Science Used In EPA Regulations

WASHINGTON (April 24, 2018) – Today, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Scott Pruitt signed a proposed rule to strengthen the science used in regulations issued by EPA. The rule will ensure that the regulatory science underlying Agency actions is fully transparent, and that underlying scientific information is publicly available in a manner sufficient for independent validation.

“The era of secret science at EPA is coming to an end,” said **EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt**. “The ability to test, authenticate, and reproduce scientific findings is vital for the integrity of rulemaking process. Americans deserve to assess the legitimacy of the science underpinning EPA decisions that may impact their lives.”

This proposed rule is in line with the scientific community’s moves toward increased data sharing to address the “replication crisis”—a growing recognition that a significant proportion of published research may not be reproducible. The proposal is consistent with data access requirements for major scientific journals like [*Science*](#), [*Nature*](#), and [*Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*](#) as well as recommendations from the Bipartisan Policy Center’s [*Science for Policy Project*](#) and the Administrative Conference of the United States’ [*Science in the Administrative Process Project*](#).

The proposed rule builds upon President Trump’s executive orders on regulatory reform and energy independence:

Executive Order 13777, issued in March 2017, provides that regulatory reform efforts shall attempt to identify “those regulations that rely in whole or in part on data, information, or methods that are not publicly available or that are insufficiently transparent to meet the standard of reproducibility.”

Executive Order 13783, also issued in March 2017, provides that “It is the policy of the United States that necessary and appropriate environmental regulations comply with the law, are of greater benefit than cost, when permissible, achieve environmental improvements for the American people, and are developed through transparent processes that employ the best available peer-reviewed science and economics.”

Chairman Lamar Smith (R-TX): “Administrator Pruitt’s announcement ensures that data will be secret no more. For too long, the EPA has issued rules and regulations based on data that has been withheld from the American people. It’s likely that in the past, the data did not justify all regulations. Today, Administrator Pruitt rightfully is changing business as usual and putting a stop to hidden agendas.”

Senator Mike Rounds (R-SD): “Sound, reliable science is vital to helping us make important policy decisions that impact the health of American families and their livelihoods. Inserting new levels of transparency in the EPA rulemaking process will help make the agency more accountable to the American people and help everyone understand the impact of EPA’s decisions. Today’s directive is a significant step toward making sure these decisions are not made behind closed doors with information accessible only to those writing the regulations, but rather in the full view of those who will be affected.”

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